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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/660,381	09/12/2000	Ernst F. Schroder	RCA 90,316	6814

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04/24/2003

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EXAMINER

BROWN, VERNAL U

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2635

DATE MAILED: 04/24/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/660,381

Applicant(s)

SCHRODER, ERNST F.

Examiner

Vernal U Brown

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 February 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 12 September 2000 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

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DETAILED ACTION

This action is responsive to communication filed on February 25, 2003.

Response to Amendment

The examiner has acknowledged the amended claims 1-4.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed on 2/25/2003 have been fully examined but were not persuasive.

Regarding applicant argument concerning the measures taken to improve voice recognition, Launey et al. teaches a signal processor unit (speech processor, 58) for processing the output signal of the microphones (64) separating the background signal from the voice signal (col. 12 lines 60-65).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Launey et al. U.S. Patent 5086385.

Regarding claim 1, Launey et al. teaches a voice control system (col. 3 lines 30-31). Launey et al. teaches a plurality of microphones connected to a speech recognition unit for

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converting voice command into operational command (col. 10 lines 3-16). Launey et al. also teaches remote microphones connected in such a way so that signal generated by the microphones are transmitted to the central speech recognition unit (col.15 lines 39-41). Launey et al. further teaches multiple voice recognition location which incorporates a microphone (col. 15 lines 37-39) and the speech recognition locations are used to control appliances (col. 2 lines 43-54), therefore the microphones are distributed between the different appliances. Launey et al. teaches a signal processor unit (speech processor, 58) for processing the output signal of the microphones (64) separating the background signal from the voice signal (col. 12 lines 60-65) and also teaches spatial separation by having multiple voice recognition location (col. 15 lines 37-40).

Regarding claim 2, Launey et al. teaches the appliances are connected via AT bus (col. 14 lines 48-49). The AT bus forms a bi-directional network.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Launey et al. U.S Patent 5086385 in view of Lea U.S Patent 6349352.

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Regarding claim 3, Launey et al. teaches the appliances are connected via a AT bus network (col. 14 lines 48-49) but is silent on teaching the bi-directional network is based on the IEEE 1394 bus. Lea in an art related Home Audio/Video Network With Both Generic And Parameterized Device Control teaches the use of the IEEE 1394 bus to connect home appliance (col. 7 lines 48-49).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art for the bi-directional network to be based on the IEEE 1394 bus in Launey et al. as evidenced by Lea because Launey et al. suggests the use of a standard type network bus and Lea teaches the use of the IEEE 1394 bus as a standard bus to connect home appliances.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Launey et al. U.S Patent 5086385 in view of Stein U.S Patent 5963872.

Regarding claim 4, Launey et al. is silent on teaching one or more microphones integrated in a consumer electronics reproduction appliance and one or more microphones are integrated in external loudspeakers. Stein in an art related Electronic Equipment Audio System invention teaches the coupling of the microphone and speaker to an appliance (col. 3 lines 7-9).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have one or more integrated in a consumer electronics reproduction appliance and one or more microphones are integrated in external loudspeakers in Launey et al. as evidenced by Stein because Launey et al. suggests a microphone coupled to the appliances and Stein teaches the coupling of the microphone and speaker to an appliance for the inputting of voice command for controlling the appliance.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).


A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Vernal U Brown whose telephone number is 703-305-3864. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th, 8:30 AM-6:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Horabik can be reached on 703-305-4704. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-308-6743 for regular communications and 703-308-6743 for After Final communications.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.


Vernal Brown
April 22, 2003

MICHAEL HORABIK
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2600

